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# GERMANS IN ENGLAND IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

It will be remembered that King Alfred, in his Preface to the Old English version of the 'Pastoral Care,' refers to a period when foreigners, presumably Continental Europeans, were accustomed to resort to England in search of knowledge and wisdom. His words are: "hú man útanbordes wísdóm and láre hieder on lǫnd sóhte, and hú wé hie nú sceoldon úte begietan, gif wé hie habban sceoldon;" that is, "how they came from abroad to this country to seek wisdom and learning, and how we should now be obliged to procure the latter from foreign parts, were we bent on having them at all." MULLINGER, in his 'Schools of Charles the Great,' casually mentions a confirmatory fact on p. 114: "Liudger, a native indeed of Friesland, but one of Alcuin's scholars in England, was raised by Charles, at his former instructor's suggestion, to preside over the newly created see of Münster." Even this tolerably well-known fact has never been employed, I believe, to illustrate Alfred's statement. Moreover, collateral evidence to the same effect is not wanting. The very names mentioned by MULLINGER in the context of the passage already quoted, may be made to prove the reverse of his inference concerning them. He says: "It is not improbable that this jealousy was to some extent stimulated by the preference which, either from expediency or inclination, Alcuin evidently entertained for his own countrymen. It was Wizo, one of his companions from York to Aachen, who taught for a time as his approved successor at the Palace School. Fredegis, who had also been educated at York, afterwards succeeded to the same post and was abbot, after Alcuin, at Tours. . . . The impression that we thus derive of a certain amount of national prejudice on Alcuin's part, serves to illustrate the difference between his character and that of Charles." Now how comes it that men with such names as Wizo and Fredegis are regarded as countrymen of Alcuin's? The chief facts respecting the relation in which they stood to Alcuin are to be found in Migne, 'Patrologia,' vol. 150. From this source the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. Wizo and Fredegis were among those pupils who were nearest to him, and to whom he was most tenderly attached, when his end was approaching. So in the anonymous Life (Migne 150: 99): "discipulis similiter tradebat, quorum nobilissimus Sigulfus erat Vetulus, magnanimus Withso; post hos Fredegisus et ejus socii."

2. Both had been educated by Alcuin (Migne, p. 408): "De quibus siquidem præceptis sæpius vos admonui in schola eruditionis vestræ. Sed nuper de nido paternæ educationis educti, ad publicas evolastis auras."

3. Wizo became known by the Latin name of Candidus (Migne, p. 408): "Epistola ad Candidum, id est Wizonem."

4. At a certain time, probably about the year 796, Candidus went, or returned, to England. Alcuin writes (Migne, p. 210): "Ego pene, quasi orbatus filliis, remaneo domi. Damæta Saxoniam, Homerus Italiam, Candidus Britanniam recessit."

5. Frobenius, the editor of Alcuin, is of opinion that Continental students attended the monastery school at York, when it was under the direction of Alcuin (Migne, p. 33): "Ad beatum Alcuinum igitur scholas Eboracenses moderantem magnus undique et ab exteris quoque regionibus erat discentium confluxus. . . . Plures alios viros aut juvenes ab exteris nationibus ad Angliæ scholas illo tempore fama eruditionis celebratas, maxime ad Eboracensem quam beatus Alcuinus moderabatur, venisse credibile est: quinam vero illi fuerint, monumentis deficientibus, ignoramus." To the same effect Lingard, 'Hist. Anglo-Saxon Church,' 2: 185: "The reputation of the Northumbrian school spread over the Continent: and students from Gaul and Germany crowded to York, that they might profit by the lectures of the Anglo-Saxon." But his only proof is a quotation from the Vita S. Liudgeri in 'Act. Bened.,' the meaning of which depends upon the sense attributed to the word *undecunque*: "Eo tempore in Eboraca civitate famosus merito scholam magister Alcuinus tenebat, undecunque ad se confluentibus de magna sua scientia communicans."

6. Frobenius thinks Wizo must have been a countryman of Alcuin's, since otherwise he

would hardly have been entrusted with such delicate and confidential missions (Migne, p. 34): "Beati Alcuini popularem illiusque in schola Eboracensi discipulum, ac postea etiam in Galliam comitem exstitisse, præter præfationem et epistolam mox citatas singularis etiam illa erga ipsum in negotiis suis gerendis confidentia ac familiaritas suadere videtur, quam vir prudens vix indulsisset discipulis peregrinæ regionis, quorum ingenium nondum satis exploratum habere potuit."

My own conclusions with respect to the nationality of Wizo and Fredegis differ from those of MULLINGER, and with respect to Wizo, likewise from those of FROBENIUS. The considerations adduced under the 1st, 2d, 4th and 5th heads are perfectly compatible with the assumption that both Wizo and Fredegis were students from the Continent, and that under the 6th head is not sufficient to invalidate such a hypothesis. Still, we should not be warranted in overturning the generally accepted belief, were not the evidence of language entirely conclusive. Stripped of its Latin case-terminations, Fredegis occurs in the forms Fredegis-(3), Fridugis-(2), Fridugis-(1), and Fridugils-(1). No one of these forms is either West-Saxon or Northumbrian, though the last approximates somewhat closely to the normal Northumbrian spelling, which is Friðugils or Frioðugils. The preponderance of the ending *-gis* is sufficient to establish the Continental origin of the person designated, unless his name, as does not appear to have been customary on visits of the English to Germany, had been Germanized. There is not one Northumbrian or West-Saxon *-gis* of this period (SWFET, 'Oldest English Texts,' p. 627), while it is common, side by side with *-gisil*, in Old High German (FÖRSTEMANN, 'Altdeutsches Namenbuch,' pp. 515-9). As to Wizo, it signifies 'Candidus, (3, above), or, in English, 'White.' But the regular Old English form of this proper name was Hwita or Hufta ('Oldest English Texts,' p. 632), while Wizo is Old High German (FÖRSTEMANN, p. 1281). Hence we must conclude that both of these scholars were Germans, who had first been attracted to England by the fame of Alcuin's school.

But our evidence from phonology does not

stop here. There must have been other Continental Germans in England at an early period, else whence come such proper names as the Gêrferð and Gêrwald of the Liber Vitæ, side by side with Gárfrið and Gárwald? Such interchange of *á* and *ê* within a single Old English dialect is unparalleled. The *ê* is as clearly Continental German as the *á* is Old English. Indeed, we hear of a Gerwold who was sent as envoy from Charlemagne to Offa towards the close of the eighth century (LAPPENBERG, 'Anglo-Saxon Kings,' I: 293), while, on the other hand, we have an English Gerbrand in the reign of Cnut (LAPPENBERG 2: 250-1.). Of course we are not to suppose that the names beginning with Gêr- were in every case borne by individuals of German birth, any more than that every German name in our own country stands for a person born on foreign soil. The names would become hereditary, and might be borrowed by other families for bestowal on their children. But the fact remains just as patent that the names were importations, and point to original tribal differences. And of all the causes likely to attract Continental Germans to England, in the period intermediate between the coming of Theodore and Hadrian (A. D. 669) and the close of the eighth century, none would seem more probable than the fame of the great precursors of the English Universities, the schools of Canterbury and York.

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#### DEFINITIONS WANTED.

In the 'Awntyrs of Arthure' occur the following words which I do not understand nor do any of the glossaries explain:—

MOYSSSED. "It [the ghost] moysssed for made."

PLEWES. The ghost in life had abundance "of pales, of powndis, of parkes, of plewes."

MOBYLLS. Waynour asks if matins or masses "or any mobylls on molde" may help the ghost.

SETT HAULLE. The princes went to supper in "Randolfe sett haulle."

ONE STRAYE. Gawayn's armor was adorned with stars of gold, "that stekillede was